THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) and (b) While the position in this regard varies from country to country, this Ministry has not received any demand by popular film producers to shift the subject of cinema to the Department of Culture.

(c) Does not arise.

Payment as A.I.R. Lift Charges to Indian Air Force

3578. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry owes certain amount to the Indian Air Force for Airlift charges;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for non-payment of the dues; and

(d) the time by which this amount is likely to be paid?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Defence (Air Headquarters) has preferred claims to the tune of Rs. 10,55,22,373 on account of airlift charges pertaining this Ministry. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 10,53,97,052 pertains to Doordarshan. An amount of Rs. 1,19,344 pertains to Films Division and Rs. 227 to DAVP. Bills to the tune of Rs. 5,750 which are said to have been sent, have not been received.

(c) Doordarshan have been requesting Ministry of Defence to reconsider the matter and to charge airlifting charges on concessional rates, as the amount billed was felt to be high. Person(s) who travelled were apparently neither engaged by Films Division nor DAVP. The matter has accordingly been taken up with Air Headquarters.

(d) The payment will be made as soon as the issue is mutually settled.

Nutrition Standard of People

3579. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rural development programmes have made any significant impact on the nutrition standard of the people;

(b) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard in tribal, rural and urban slum areas; and

(c) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) : (a) to (c) None of the Programmes being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment directly aims at improving the nutrition standard of the people. However, the results of latest repeat survey conducted by National Nutrition monitoring Bureau of Indian Council of Medical Research in 10 States of the Country indicated that the nutrition status of rural children improved significantly.

Shankar Guruswamy Committee

3580. SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the reaction of the Government on Shankar Guruswamy Committee on power transmission; and

(b) the details regarding the present status on action taken on these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The Committee of Experts constituted by the Government of India under Shri D. Sankaraguruswamy has submitted its report in July, 1997. The implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts can only be taken after the Electricity Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1997 is passed by Parliament. The Bill is now under consideration by the Standing Committee on Energy.

Technological Problem in Steel Industry

3581. SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of major technological problems faced by the Steel Industry;

(b) whether the Steel Authority of India Ltd. propose to offer research and development projects on a contract basis to outside contractors; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The level of technology available in Indian Steel Industry is still below the international level. However, the situation is gradually improving with the newer companies adopting the latest technologies and modernisation of the SAIL plants.

(b) The R & D Centre of SAIL is primarily working for the Steel Plants and Units of SAIL including its subsidiaries. However, some R & D projects are also undertaken for outside parties on mutually agreed terms and conditions.